

About MECA (Milwaukee Early Care Administration)

MECA is responsible for providing access to affordable, high quality childcare and early education experiences, to enhance the development of children and to support their families in work and parenting roles in Milwaukee County.

Authorizations

The Authorization Services Section completes authorizations for all Milwaukee County Shares recipients.

The subsidy is issued directly to the regulated child care providers, on behalf of our participant's children, which helps defer some of the child care expenses our families incur while they are in an approved activity.

This unit receives an average of 3,000-6,000 requests for authorizations a month and the normal processing time is 24 – 72 business hours.

Provider Services

The Provider Services Section in MECA consists of child care provider liaisons that are responsible for processing Wisconsin Shares payments for licensed and certified providers in Milwaukee County. The unit has responsibility for the following functions:

- Timely entry of attendance reports and processing of online attendance.
- Assurance of accurate provider payments including reconciliation of provider submissions.
- Identification and prevention of fraudulent activity in the Shares Program
- Serves as a resource to providers by providing technical assistance and problem resolution.

Child Care Certification

The MECA Certification staff certifies and evaluates child care providers in Milwaukee County to determine compliance with regulations established by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in order to protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of the children in day care homes serving 6 or less children.

Additionally, Certification staff monitors providers by conducting announced and unannounced visits 4 times a year; reports findings of certified programs; and provides technical assistance to individuals involved in certified child care to improve professionalism, best practices and quality.

Program Integrity - Client

This unit's main functions are to prevent, monitor, identify and enforce improper payments and fraud of the Wisconsin Shares program. This section investigates any potential claim of client fraud as it relates to the over issuance of childcare benefits due to agency error, client error, and intentional program violations.

The vision of the program integrity unit is to:

- Achieve cost savings in the Child Care Subsidy budget by reducing overpayments over time.
- Shift from reaction to prevention of childcare fraud and program abuse.
- Project a positive image of the Wisconsin Share Child care Subsidy Program to the public.

Results from an investigation do not always result in an overpayment, but possibly a reduction or denial of benefits.

While the unit is committed to efforts of investigating all suspected fraud, there will be a new focus on prevention by providing education on the prevention of fraud.